

# k'ang Yu-wei and T'an Ssu-t'ung's Arrangement of Buddhism and Confucianism and Their Enlightenment

Yixia Wei

Department of Chinese Philosophy, Faculty of Philosophy, Heilongjiang University, Harbin, China

**Email address:**

[weiyixia@hlju.edu.cn](mailto:weiyixia@hlju.edu.cn)

**To cite this article:**

Yixia Wei. k'ang Yu-wei and T'an Ssu-t'ung's Arrangement of Buddhism and Confucianism and Their Enlightenment. *International Journal of Philosophy*. Vol. 8, No. 2, 2020, pp. 54-60. doi: 10.11648/j.ijp.20200802.15

**Received:** December 4, 2019; **Accepted:** June 2, 2020; **Published:** June 17, 2020

---

**Abstract:** k'ang Yu-wei and T'an Ssu-t'ung were both very fond of Buddhism, and were very fond of the relationship between Buddhism, Confucianism and Buddhism. In fact, there are similarities and differences in the recognition of the relationship between Buddhism, Confucianism and Buddhism. k'ang Yu-wei ranked Confucianism, Buddhism and Buddhism, while T'an Ssu-t'ung ranked Buddhism, Confucianism and Buddhism. This order not only shows the same arrangement of Buddhism, but also shows the different arrangement of Christianity and Confucianism. In fact, their different ranking of Buddhism and Confucianism itself is a value judgment, indicating that k'ang Yu-wei supported Confucianism and T'an Ssu-t'ung advocated Buddhism. Although k'ang Yu-wei loudly advocated the establishment of Confucianism as the state religion in reality, he affirmed that Confucianism was applicable to the present and Buddhism to the future in the multiplication of Confucianism and Buddhism. T'an Ssu-t'ung, like k'ang Yu-wei, believed that Buddhism is and will be prevailed in datong society. On the one hand, both men affirmed the compatibility of Buddhism and Confucianism, and described benevolence as the common purpose of both. On the other hand, the definition of benevolence by k'ang Yu-wei and T'an Ssu-t'ung follows the unbearable human heart of Confucianism and the compassionate heart of Buddhism, and finally deduces two different forms and patterns: k'ang Yu-wei constructs the Buddhism of fraternity, and T'an Ssu-t'ung constructs the Buddhism of equality.

**Keywords:** k'ang Yu-wei, T'an Ssu-t'ung, Buddhism and Confucianism, Rank Arrangement

---

## 1. Introduction

k'ang Yu-wei, and T'an Ssu-t'ung were both interested in Buddhism and used to view and interpret Buddhism in relation to Confucianism and Buddhism. In this way, the three-religion relationship composed of Buddhism, Confucianism and Buddhism became an important dimension for both of them to examine Buddhism, which also made the three-religion relationship the core topic of k'ang Yu-wei's and T'an Ssu-t'ung's buddhist and religious views. On the one hand, through modern philosophers thought as you can see, whether to Buddhism and Confucianism, and teach in or on the three religions relish all shows close tie between k'ang Yu-wei, T'an Ssu-t'ung between tacit understanding, also pulled open the distance between them and other modern contemporary philosophers. On the other hand, k'ang Yu-wei and T'an Ssu-t'ung did not rank Christianity in the same order as Confucianism and Buddhism, and Christianity was consistent to rank in the last place, focusing on the relationship between

Confucianism and Buddhism. This makes the relationship between Confucianism and Buddhism is very important, which not only reflects the different positioning of Buddhism, but also indicates that there are differences and even irreconcilable antagonisms in the buddhist views of k'ang Yu-wei and T'an Ssu-t'ung. In view of this, the comparison of their ranking of Buddhism and Confucianism can not only deeply understand the views of k'ang Yu-wei and T'an Ssu-t'ung on Buddhism, Confucianism and the diversity of modern Buddhism, but also help to fully grasp their different philosophical ideas, academic interests and religious appeals.

## 2. Confucianism and Buddhism or Buddhism and Confucianism

k'ang Yu-wei and T'an Ssu-t'ung have a special feature together with other modern philosophers who are also fond of Buddhism, that is, they like to examine, compare and evaluate

Buddhism in the relationship between the three religions. That said, the two men are not examining Buddhism in isolation, but are keen to compare it with Confucianism and Buddhism. In the process of comparison, k'ang Yu-wei and T'an Ssu-t'ung not only recognized the common purpose of benevolence as the three religions, but also proved it. This is what it means to put Christianity in the last place or to affirm Buddhism in the future. In the position of Buddhism and Confucianism, k'ang Yu-wei inclined to Confucianism, while T'an Ssu-t'ung promoted Buddhism. As for the relationship between Buddhism and Confucianism and Christianity, k'ang Yu-wei and T'an Ssu-t'ung agreed that Christianity is the last, and their differences focused on the relationship between Confucianism and Buddhism. Not only that, for the comparison of Buddhism, Confucianism and Christianity, the two focus on the comparison of Buddhism and Confucianism. For this reason, k'ang Yu-wei chose Confucianism as his first choice based on the need of realistic struggle, while T'an Ssu-t'ung advocated Buddhism to the utmost. This means that both of them have no equal views on Buddhism and Confucianism, but affirm and highlight the advantages and disadvantages of Buddhism and Confucianism. At this point, the relationship between, and Christianity was deduced by k'ang Yu-wei and T'an Ssu-t'ung as different orders of Confucianism Buddhism Christianity and Buddhism Confucianism Christianity.

To be sure, k'ang Yu-wei's praise and promotion of Confucianism was not without hesitation, or even from beginning to end. In the *datong shu*, which was finalized between 1901 and 1902, he proclaimed the raft of Confucius as "dang she". Nevertheless, in reality, especially in the comparison of Buddhism, Confucianism and Christianity, k'ang Yu-wei's worship of Confucianism surpassed Buddhism and Christianity, making it the first among the three religions. It is for

this reason that when mentioning k'ang Yu-wei's religious views and even his political views or dominant thoughts, people first think of making kongism the state religion rather than his other religious thoughts and propositions including Buddhism. And have a special liking to Confucian advocated is not firmly or set each other off becomes an interest, k'ang Yu-wei's attitude towards Buddhism swing, thus the definition and understanding of relationship between Buddhism and Confucianism is full of contradictions, at the same time of Buddhism and Confucianism certainly close mutually, sometimes derogatory remarks about Buddhism, such as playing god "inverse of love" that Buddhism, Confucianism, "in the direction of love", etc.; Sometimes they cling to Buddhism. For example, they emphasize that sakyamuni, like Confucius, is a great doctor who is flexible and dispenses medicine due to illness. The views of Confucius, Mencius and Chuang Tzu are similar to those of Buddhism. Also revealing his attitude towards Buddhism and his conflicts, k'ang Yu-wei made a special analysis of the relationship between Buddhism and Confucianism, and proposed that Confucianism is applicable to the present and Buddhism is applicable to the future. Therefore, k'ang Yu-wei advocated Confucianism in the real world while reserving the territory for Buddhism in

the future. In other words, when Confucianism meets Buddhism in the real world, he turns to Confucianism; When the two meet in the future society, k'ang Yu-wei leans toward Buddhism. More importantly, k'ang Yu-wei followed the thought of kong shifu and regarded the establishment of Confucianism as the national religion as the program of saving the nation from extinction. This made him uphold the position of Confucianism, in the process of competing Confucianism with the ya religion to highlight the supremacy of Confucianism. In k'ang Yu-wei's case, the order of the three religions was that Buddhism gave way to Confucianism, and yeeism came last.

Although k'ang Yu-wei's understanding of the relationship between Buddhism and Confucianism was full of tension, and his attitude towards Buddhism was perplexed and tangled, however, in terms of reality, he respected Confucianism, so he advocated for the establishment of Confucianism for the state religion. In this sense, he put Confucianism above Buddhism. For k'ang Yu-wei's religious view, Liang ch'i-chao's evaluation is that, while advocating freedom of belief and equality of the three religions, he regards Confucianism as the starting point to save China, and therefore "takes the restoration of Confucianism as the first step". Liang ch'i-chao not only attaches great importance to k'ang Yu-wei's proposition, but also reveals k'ang Yu-wei's good intentions. According to Liang qichao's analysis and disclosure, k'ang Yu-wei's religious thoughts were especially strong, and there were many religions he cared about and admired -- besides Buddhism, Confucianism and Buddhism, there were also Islam and Taoism. As for the relationship between Buddhism, Confucianism and Christianity, k'ang Yu-wei emphasized the equality of the three religions and regarded Confucianism as the "first hand" to save China. This is the result of his comprehensive consideration and choice of Chinese folk custom, history, national emotion and many other factors. In fact, k'ang Yu-wei was motivated by the dual motives of saving the nation and enlightenment, and regarded Confucianism as the symbol of Chinese culture. On this basis, on the one hand, he highlights the supremacy and absolute authority of Confucianism, on the other hand, he infects Confucianism with the modern western values of freedom, equality, fraternity and evolution, so as to promote the transformation and modernization of Chinese traditional culture.

T'an Ssu-t'ung, like k'ang Yu-wei, was keen on the relationship between Buddhism, Confucianism and Christianity, and repeatedly defined the relationship between the three religions from different perspectives and judged the strengths and weaknesses of the three religions. To put Buddhism at the top of the three religions is T'an Ssu-t'ung's basic identification and consistent thinking on Buddhism, Confucianism and Buddhism, and also on the relationship between Buddhism and Confucianism affirmed the positioning and attitude of Buddhism different from k'ang Yu-wei. In T'an Ssu-t'ung, there was no contradiction and entanglement of Buddhism like k'ang Yu-wei, only the unflinching love for Buddhism. Therefore, for the relationship between Buddhism and Confucianism, T'an Ssu-t'ung put

Buddhism first. Not only that, he is the highest praise for Buddhism, adhere to the "Buddha can unify Confucianism and Christianity [1] ". Along this line of thought, T'an Ssu-t'ung firmly advocated Buddhism, claiming that Buddhism came first in time, second in Confucianism, and last in Buddhism. Following this logic, he asserted that Buddhism was the largest, Confucianism the second, and Buddhism the third. As for the relationship between Buddhism and Confucianism and Buddhism, he repeatedly asserted the supreme authority of Buddhism from the two dimensions of time sequence and the advantages and disadvantages, and put forward the order of Buddhism, Confucianism and Buddhism. Thus it can be seen that T'an Ssu-t'ung worshiped Buddhism, and his definition and attitude to Buddhism were far from that of k'ang Yu-wei.

T'an Ssu-t'ung acknowledged that sakyamuni, like Confucius and Jesus, was the master of the church, and that Buddhism was connected with the teachings of Confucianism and Buddhism. These reflect the consensus with k'ang Yu-wei. The difference is that T'an Ssu-t'ung stressed that Buddhism, Confucianism and Christianity were born in a different historical background and social environment, and these objective conditions determine the status and order of the three religions can not be reversed. Along this line of thought, he put forward the view that Buddhism is the greatest, the first, Confucianism is the second, Christianity is the last. For the legitimacy and rationality of this sequence, T'an Ssu-t'ung gave the following reasons: first, from the perspective of time, Buddhism came first, Confucianism came second, and then Christianity came last -- "Buddha's birth came first, Confucianism came second, Christianity came second [1] ". Second, in terms of content, Buddhism is better than Confucianism -- "the six sutras have not been in cooperation with Buddhism, that is, have not been able to outside the buddhist sutras [1]"; Buddhism is better than Christianity -- "it is said that all western learning originates from Buddhism [1]". According to T'an Ssu-t'ung, Confucianism and Buddhism are close to each other because they are absorbed by Buddhism. This means that Buddhism includes the content of Confucianism, or that Confucianism is subordinate to Buddhism. For western learning from Buddhism, there is no doubt that it is lower than Buddhism. Therefore, Buddhism is higher than the teachings of Confucius after the Christianity is self-evident. Based on this understanding, T'an Ssu-t'ung made a very different definition of Buddhism from k'ang Yu-wei: "Buddhism is big, Confucianism is small, and Christianity is small. [1]" Obviously, T'an Ssu-t'ung believed in the supremacy of Buddhism in the relationship between the three religions. Each other with this list, although he is used to compare Buddhism and Confucianism, and the teaching, however, T'an Ssu-t'ung and didn't have regarded Confucianism, but from different angles to arrange seating arrangement, three religions and from beginning to end in order to let the Buddhism occupy the supreme status - this includes both consistent with k'ang Yu-wei Buddhism for supremacy, and the teaching also includes with k'ang Yu-wei different or even opposite supremacy of Buddhism to Confucianism.

### 3. Confucianism and Buddhism

The ranking of Buddhism and Confucianism by k'ang Yu-wei and T'an Ssu-t'ung is itself a value judgment, which includes not only the judgment on the merits of Buddhism and Confucianism, but also the judgment on whether to choose the two religions. It is not hard to imagine that by ranking Confucianism and Buddhism, the two men showed their different attitudes towards Buddhism. In a word, k'ang Yu-wei's attitude towards Buddhism is contradictory, while T'an Ssu-t'ung's praise for Buddhism is incomparable.

In k'ang Yu-wei's case, his contradictory understanding of the relationship between Buddhism and Confucianism revealed his contradictory evaluation of Buddhism, which was also highlighted by the comparison between Buddhism and Confucianism. For him, the authority of Confucianism included not only the exclusive status of Confucius for various schools and Confucianism for the schools of thought, but also the superiority and authority of Confucianism for Buddhism. In view of this, in k'ang Yu-wei's discussion, the following judgment is obviously not an individual case:

Buddha is the opposite of Confucius, and then can stand. Holy love its kind, not the same kind can also kill, if the same kind can not kill also. This sage is righteous [2].

Buddha gives up his kind and loves his mixture [3].

Buddha's rule of mind, there is no outside also [2].

Here, k'ang Yu-wei first clearly affirmed the doctrine of Buddhism and Confucianism is different even opposite ("instead"), and then specified where the opposition of them lie in and unveiled his own attitude, which reveals his strong dissatisfaction of Buddhism: first, k'ang Yu-wei admitted that Buddhism in the purpose of benevolence, and "benevolence" is the name. In this dimension, he believes that Buddhism shares the same purpose of salvation with Confucianism. At the same time, k'ang Yu-wei pointed out that there is an essential difference between Buddhism and the benevolence of Confucianism, which focuses on the "love mankind" and is finally reflected through the concentration of human relations. He declared: "those who can love mankind are called benevolence; those who do not love are called unkindness. [4]" Love is the inevitable requirement of benevolence, and love of mankind is the due meaning of benevolence. Following this thought, k'ang Yu-wei regarded "love mankind" as the criterion to judge benevolence, and criticized Buddhism for violating the "love mankind" principle of benevolence and making the mistake of "giving up love for all". Because the benevolence of Buddhism does not follow the principle of "love mankind", the result is to confuse the love for human beings with the love for sentient beings, resulting in serious consequences, and finally towards the aspect of benevolence -- unbenevolence. Second, k'ang Yu-wei affirmed Buddhism's health preservation, but he did not completely agree with Buddhism's health preservation method, and criticized Buddhism for "having the inside but not the outside". He was fascinated by various health theories, and on this premise admitted that Buddhism "governs the mind". This confirms with k'ang Yu-wei's definition of

buddhist spiritual cultivation, affirming that the health of Buddhism focuses on spiritual cultivation, and also accords with his pursuit of health preservation, music and value. The key to the problem is that k'ang Yu-wei not only pays attention to raising the soul, but also pays attention to raising the soul, thus emphasizing the soul and raising. In this respect, he shaped Confucius as a role model for both the soul and the teachings of Confucius. From this perspective of k'ang Yu-wei's Buddhism, "governing the mind" is not wrong, wrong in a "special" word. It is the mistake of Buddhism to give up the external form for the purpose of "governing the mind", which is also the reason why k'ang Yu-wei criticized Buddhism. On this premise, he revealed that Buddhism "has the inside but not the outside", accusing Buddhism of focusing on cultivating the mind and only focusing on internal cultivation, and neglecting to cultivate the form due to the inferiority of the form. As a result, Buddhism is so apathetic that it abandons the pursuit of fame and fortune. At this point, k'ang Yu-wei came to the conclusion that Buddhism was "far away from people", and even asserted that Buddhism could not conform to people's feelings and would not be feasible. Over and over again he declared:

Confucius made laws to control human beings, and the old and Buddha feared to be controlled by others [2].

In the song dynasty, Confucian sayings are deep in theory. However, if they are deep enough, they go into Buddhism [2].

Confucius is not for Buddhism, that its far people, so not for [2].

Through the above argumentation, k'ang Yu-wei reiterated his position on Confucianism and further confirmed the conclusion that Confucianism is higher than Buddhism. Consistent with this, when Buddhism and Confucianism met in the real society, k'ang Yu-wei resolutely supported Confucianism and derogated Buddhism (as for this, kang youwei's attack on the academic situation at that time provides the evidence: "today's bad custom, nonsense also. Gu tinglin's so-called ancient idle talk in the Lao tze, Chuang tzu, now idle talk in the Confucius, mencius, but until now Confucius, mencius idle talk without ears. Today's talk is Buddhism.") [5]. Buddhism never became a dominant theme in his early and middle thoughts with a keen interest in politics, let alone a clear affirmation of Buddhism over Confucianism as T'an Ssu-t'ung did. It was for this reason that k'ang Yu-wei could only place Buddhism in the future, even though he was extremely reluctant to give it up. Therefore, his description of the future religious situation in the book of datong is that Confucianism has been extinct in the society of datong, like many religions led by Buddhism and Islam. Only Buddhism and Taoism are popular. In addition, Buddhism is the most prevalent religion in datong society, which is the soul raising religion of higher level than Taoism. These situations together show k'ang Yu-wei's ambivalent psychology towards Buddhism, which not only has the helplessness of reality, but also has the worship to Buddhism.

T'an Ssu-t'ung put Buddhism above Confucianism and Buddhism, which means that he blocked the worship of Confucianism in reality like k'ang Yu-wei. In fact, T'an

Ssu-t'ung gave Buddhism not only the present but also the future as k'ang Yu-wei did. To be specific, T'an Ssu-t'ung advocated that Buddhism should govern all religions, and Confucianism and Buddhism should also be within the scope of Buddhism. T'an Ssu-t'ung worshiped Buddhism and proposed to unify the earth's religions with Buddhism for many times. This has actually swallowed up Confucianism with Buddhism, because it is also in what he calls the earth group religion. What's more, T'an Ssu-t'ung put forward the group religion represented by Confucianism and Christianity, indicating that he agreed with the Buddhism doctrine and affirmed that Buddhism was better than Confucianism. According to T'an Ssu-t'ung, Buddhism is "extremely pure, extremely broad", extremely subtle, extremely absurd; It is extremely pure and has a wide range, so it has a great universality. Buddhism is comfortable with both high culture and low society. Therefore, he admired Buddhism with all his heart, and suggested not only to use Buddhism to govern the group teaching, but also to use Buddhism to govern the group learning.

#### 4. Buddhism and the Future

k'ang Yu-wei and T'an Ssu-t'ung were both fascinated by the great harmony society and had the same characteristics in their conception of the great harmony society, that is, the same religion, the same culture and even the same language. In this process, both of them highlighted the prosperity of Buddhism in the future society, but they held different views on the existence and prosperity of Buddhism in the same society.

In k'ang Yu-wei's vision of a great society, Confucianism, Christianity have been annihilated. Not only is Buddhism not decline, but more prevalent than before. Although k'ang Yu-wei called for the establishment of Confucianism as the state religion, however, he claimed that it was no accident that Confucianism had been eliminated and Buddhism prevailed in the datong society. This is because, even as he promoted Confucianism, he did not forget to claim that Buddhism was for the future. k'ang Yu-wei stressed that Buddhism is an afterlife, applicable to the future, and having the future makes Buddhism and the future of the great harmony society meet unexpectedly. Moreover, as k'ang Yu-wei himself and liang qichao have repeatedly stated, the establishment of Confucius as the state religion is only for the sake of Confucius as the "first hand" to save China. That is to say, k'ang Yu-wei advocated Confucianism with extremely strong practicality and even utilitarianism, but he had a good impression on Buddhism. It was for this reason that he repeatedly compared the advantages of Confucianism and Buddhism and even concluded that Confucianism was feasible and Buddhism was "far away". He did not advocate abandoning Buddhism while calling for the establishment of Confucianism as the state religion, but emphasized that Buddhism and Confucianism were compatible and even "multiplied". To be specific, k'ang Yu-wei examined, compared and analyzed Buddhism and Confucianism from the perspective of dividing Yin and Yang. Therefore, the Confucian doctrine of "obedience to human

beings" is called yangjiao, and the Buddhism of "insubordination to human beings" is called yinjiao. In this dimension, he accused Buddhism of "going against heaven" and held a negative attitude towards Buddhism. At the same time, k'ang Yu-wei claimed that "there are Yin and Yang in the theory" and Yin and Yang are multiplied together, thus positioning the relationship between Confucianism and Buddhism as both differential and interdependent. In this dimension, he claimed that, just as Yin and Yang are indispensable to philosophy, Buddhism and Confucianism treat each other and depend on each other as Yin and Yang of religion: Buddhism relies on Confucianism, "there is no Buddhism at the expense of Confucius"; Confucianism also relies on Buddhism and "can't go beyond Buddhism". This shows that Buddhism and Confucianism "multiply together" and cannot exist independently without each other. Following this logic, k'ang Yu-wei's approach to the two religions was not to reject Buddhism, but to highlight the "subservient feeling" of Confucianism against Buddhism. It was in contrast to Buddhism that he turned Confucianism into Taoism. k'ang Yu-wei's position on the relationship between Buddhism and Confucianism is that "Confucianism rates its beginning and Buddhism its end". "Rate its end" indicates the existence and prevalence of Buddhism in datong society. The equality of all beings in Buddhism is the "great equality" in datong society that k'ang Yu-wei dreamed of. According to the principles of the huayan sect, which he always adhered to, Buddhism and Confucianism are compatible and compatible, which is embodied in the fact that Confucius instructs the present and Buddhism points to the future.

When go back, although Buddhism and Confucianism are related by multiplication, they are, after all, Yang Buddhism and secular dharma. Therefore, k'ang Yu-wei regarded Confucianism as a magic weapon to save the world instead of relying on Buddhism to reform and save the nation from extinction. He proposed to establish Confucianism as the state religion and to preserve the country and species through preserving education (kongjiao), which followed this logic. In k'ang Yu-wei, Confucianism and Buddhism "multiply each other", each has its own characteristics. Since the establishment of Confucius as the state religion is due to external pressure -- the urgent need to save the nation and save itself, then it is natural that Buddhism will prevail in the future. According to his description in the book of datong, on the one hand, as the soul conversion of datong people for the joy of raising their souls, Buddhism prevailed and prevailed over all religions in datong society, including Taoism. On the other hand, Buddhism is not the only form of religion in the same society. From the perspective of parallel Taoism and Buddhism, k'ang Yu-wei's vision of a great society does not have the same religion -- to be precise, he does not use the same Buddhism, assimilation of the future is a great society of religion. This shows the difference with T'an Ssu-t'ung.

T'an Ssu-t'ung not only explicitly proposed the same religion in the same society, but also explicitly proposed the assimilation and domination ("compromise") of various religions by Buddhism. In stark contrast to k'ang Yu-wei's

attitude, T'an Ssu-t'ung introduced Buddhism as a global religion and culture. For T'an Ssu-t'ung, who has always ranked Buddhism first in the world culture, the answer is no suspense, Buddhism is the first choice.

If the reality dimension mixes political elements and utilitarian considerations, the future dimension tends to be inner calling and emotional liking. k'ang Yu-wei and T'an Ssu-t'ung had different ideas about the social situation of Buddhism in datong. This disagreement not only shows the different fate of Buddhism in the future, but also reveals their different attitudes towards Buddhism.

## 5. The Buddhism of Fraternity and the Buddhism of Equality

Such above contents show that k'ang Yu-wei and T'an Ssu-t'ung had different opinions on the relationship between Confucianism and Buddhism. This reveals their different academic standpoints and their different and interesting views on Buddhism. If k'ang Yu-wei and T'an Ssu-t'ung showed the difference between Confucianism and Buddhism in their religious views, then they showed the difference between Buddhism and Buddhism in their interpretive paradigm. Constrained by different academic positions and religious interests, k'ang Yu-wei and T'an Ssu-t'ung endowed Buddhism with different verve and temperament along their respective lines, leading to the gradual estranging of each other's views on Buddhism. In this process, the positioning and position of Buddhism decided that they had different understandings of benevolence as the purpose of Buddhism, and finally made k'ang Yu-wei and T'an Ssu-t'ung's buddhist construction deduce two distinct styles of the school of fraternity and the school of equality.

In terms of the definition of benevolence, on the one hand, k'ang Yu-wei and T'an Ssu-t'ung both emphasized the importance of benevolence to Buddhism and endowed benevolence with modern values and demands of The Times, which made modern values such as freedom, equality and democracy become the basic connotation of benevolence. In this sense, their understanding of benevolence shows a certain consistency, which is totally different from the connotation of benevolence in ancient philosophy, and enhances the consistency of their buddhist views by claiming that benevolence is the purpose of Buddhism. On the other hand, k'ang Yu-wei and T'an Ssu-t'ung identified the relationship between Confucianism and Buddhism in different ways, and their definitions of benevolence showed different meanings and purposiveness, which were embodied in the benevolence of Confucianism and Buddhism. The contradiction between the benevolence of Confucianism and the benevolence of Buddhism, as stated by k'ang Yu-wei and T'an Ssu-t'ung, is fully demonstrated through their benevolence studies, which not only shows that the Buddhism and benevolence studies of k'ang Yu-wei and T'an Ssu-t'ung are integrated together, but also makes their buddhist thoughts present different verities.

k'ang Yu-wei demonstrated the implication and connotation

of benevolence's fraternity, and along this line of thought benevolence has the same meaning of unbearable heart of mencius, so called "unbearable heart", "love power", "love quality" and "absorption force". It was precisely because of his endless caritas that Liang ch'i-chao attributed k'ang Yu-wei's philosophy to "caritas philosophy" and called k'ang Yu-wei's benevolence "love power". In response to this, Liang ch'i-chao wrote: "the teacher's reasoning, with the word 'benevolence' as the only purpose,... All is due to benevolence. If there is no love, the universe should be destroyed. [6]" Here, liang qichao's introduction to k'ang Yu-wei's "philosophy of fraternity" is interchangeable between benevolence and "love power", and derived from k'ang Yu-wei's philosophy based on benevolence, "with the word" benevolence "as the only purpose", "if there is no love power, the universe should be destroyed at the right time". This logic means that k'ang Yu-wei reveals the connotation of benevolence's love. It can even be said that in the vision of liang qichao, k'ang Yu-wei said that benevolence is love -- because beyond the blood relationship, therefore called fraternity. In fact, k'ang Yu-wei defined the concept of benevolence from western learning and middle school, pointing to fraternity from different dimensions: in terms of western learning, the concept of force introduced by western natural science called benevolence "love power", "heat" and "absorbing power"; As far as middle school is concerned, emphasis is laid on the analysis of mencius' "unbearable heart" and the theory of kindness. Fundamentally speaking, k'ang Yu-wei's explanation and construction of Confucianism and benevolence are along the lines of Confucius, mencius and dong zhongshu. Shi ren not only revealed k'ang Yu-wei's Confucian standpoint of benevolence, but also laid a foundation for the philanthropic school of benevolence.

T'an Ssu-t'ung compared benevolence to buddhist compassion rather than Confucian intolerance, as what k'ang Yu-wei did promote equality through compassion. T'an Ssu-t'ung declared, "compassion is what we call benevolence. [7]" Along this line of thought, he explained benevolence by passing on it, highlighting the equality connotation of benevolence. T'an Ssu-t'ung said to the basic characteristics of benevolence: "benevolence with tong as the first meaning,..... The image of all is equality [1]". This is his definition of benevolence ("definition"), which also highlights the equality connotation of benevolence to the extreme. In order to further endow ren with equal charm and elegant demeanor, he released ren with compassion. For T'an Ssu-t'ung, the benevolence that "regards tong as the first righteousness" is also called compassion, instead of the unbearable heart as k'ang Yu-wei did. Compassion and intolerance are derived from Buddhism and Confucianism. It was the difference between the heart of compassion and the heart of intolerance that established the clear distinction between T'an Ssu-t'ung's benevolence and k'ang Yu-wei's Buddhism. With k'ang Yu-wei's infatuated with the unbearable heart, T'an Ssu-t'ung deliberately separated the heart of benevolence and unbearable people. One obvious evidence is that although T'an Ssu-t'ung proposed and interpreted benevolence and various

concepts, he never talked about fraternity or the unbearable heart of mencius. For example, T'an Ssu-t'ung wrote in the study of benevolence: "Without a name, so name it 'ether' ". Its manifest the character of use also, Confucianism called 'benevolence', called 'yuan', called 'sex'; Mohists name that 'concurrently loves'; Buddha called the 'sea of sex', called the 'compassion'; Christianity call it 'soul', 'love neighbour as themselves', 'regard thy enemy as their friend'; "Love power", "suction power"; It's all about it [1]". This passage clearly proved that T'an Ssu-t'ung thought that the meaning of benevolence, *oxue*, can not be accurately named. This is also the reason why he used a variety of concepts to append ren, resulting in ren having many aliases. Tan si-tong himself directly referred to the alias, the name of benevolence is ether, yuan, sex, love, sex, compassion, soul, love as yourself, enemy as friends, love or suction can not be, but not the name of fraternity or unbearable heart. This not only proves that T'an Ssu-t'ung's Buddhism and benevolence studies do not take Confucianism or mencius as the main source, but also proves that the Confucian fraternity originated from the heart of unbearable people is not the meaning of benevolence advocated by T'an Ssu-t'ung.

It is still necessary to mention that k'ang Yu-wei and T'an Ssu-t'ung mentioned "love power" in their speeches on benevolence. The word "love power" has existed since ancient times. It first appeared in huan kuan's "on salt and iron" in the han dynasty. ("the theory of salt and iron") here "love power" is the meaning of cherishing human and material resources, and love is the same as the subject-predicate structure, force, people are the object of love. In ancient times, love was mostly used in this sense. The "love force" in modern philosophy is influenced by Newtonian mechanics and originated from the concept of natural science, especially physics. For example, yan fu asserts: "the theory of the gewu family is that the completion of a thing is not destroyed, is firm and hard to break, and the love of the particle is the most,... Its corruption is also, then the love of the particle has no power,..... Today's Chinese point of mass, also called no love [8]". The quote "love power" refers to physical attraction. k'ang Yu-wei and T'an Ssu-t'ung's love is different from ancient times and similar to yan fu's, both of which originated from modern western natural science. Under this premise still must see, k'ang Yu-wei said "love" is the Confucian love and Newton mechanical force combined product, highlight the power of love, so called fraternity. T'an Ssu-t'ung's "love power" is directly derived from the concept of modern western physics. In order to highlight this point, he explicitly called it "love power". The difference of "love power" proves that k'ang Yu-wei's benevolence studies take Confucianism as the mother version and T'an Ssu-t'ung's benevolence studies take Buddhism as the mother version. k'ang Yu-wei, with the help of Confucianism, constructed the school of fraternity Buddhism, while T'an Ssu-t'ung, with the help of benevolence, constructed the school of equality Buddhism.

As is known to all, the explanation of benevolence by benevolence comes from the book of filial piety. In fact, the

Confucian concept of fraternity has a longer history, which can be traced back to Confucius' "universal love for all" (the analects of Confucius) and Mencius' "kindness for all" (Mencius' devotion to all "). Kang Yu-wei's philosophy of "fraternity" was issued in the name of Confucius, directly derived from Mencius' heart of intolerance. It can be inferred that there is an internal logical connection between the absence of Mencius' unforgiving heart and Tan Si-tong's non-Confucian form of benevolence. It is the essential difference between Tan Si-tong and Kang Yu-wei's benevolence studies that whether to interpret benevolence with the heart of the unbearable person, which also makes the Buddhism they speak move towards the school of fraternity and the school of equality due to the different connotations of benevolence. Compassion is a Buddhist term, and the release of benevolence by compassion helped Tan Ssu-t'ung find the way of salvation from benevolence to equality. In the horizon of Tan Ssu-t'ung, so-called mercy, is to wipe out all the difference, break all treated equal, so it would not have been "benevolence to pass to the first righteousness" as equal "of" Tong said. It is because Tan Si-tong's benevolence takes equality as the first principle, and Liang Qi-chao generalizes Tan Si-tong's benevolence study with equality, which is different from Liang Qi-chao's interpreting Kang Yu-wei's benevolence with "love power" and Kang Yu-wei's benevolence study with "fraternity school". Liang Qichao different summary and induction of Kang Yu-wei, Tan Ssu-t'ung benevolence demonstrated the essential difference between the two benevolence, Kang Yu-wei, Tan Ssu-t'ung and common purpose with benevolence as the core category of Buddhism is a set for humanity, an equal, with two people on the concept of benevolence in a fraternity, a different path with equal explain ren. On the premise of affirming "nengren" as the name of Buddha, Kang Yu-wei interpreted Buddhism from the perspective of avenging kinship, equality and generality, and tried to build the school of Buddhism, which became the theoretical source and content of his "school of Buddhism philosophy". Tan Ssu-t'ung relied on compassion to interpret Buddhism from the perspective of equality, which made Buddhism the main weapon to demonstrate equality. This is true whether the world is born and destroyed or the treatment between people is broken. It is for this reason that Liang Qichao commented on Tan Ssu-t'ung's benevolence and Buddhism: "benevolence is equal and has no difference. There is no alternative. Therefore, there is no size to speak of. [9]".

To sum up, Kang Yu-wei and Tan Ssu-t'ung's attention and explanation of Buddhism is an integral part of the modern Buddhism craze. The modern Buddhism craze in China arose under the influence of the dual motives of saving the nation and enlightenment, which shoulder the dual historical mission just like the modern philosophy and culture. It is for this reason that modern philosophers, including Kang Yu-wei and Tan Si-tong, have advocated Buddhism with the intention of saving the nation and saving itself, such as purifying the heart with Buddhism and advocating the fearless spirit of death. There are also pictures of enlightenment, such as Buddhism advocating modern values represented by freedom, equality,

fraternity and evolution. It is the characteristic of modern Buddhism to publicize freedom, equality and fraternity through Buddhism. The specific views and emphases of modern philosophers are different. Zhang Binglin believes that Buddhism pursues equality and is compatible with the revolutionary party. Based on this understanding, affirming the pursuit of equality in Buddhism became one of the main reasons for Zhang Binglin to advocate Buddhism. It is not difficult to see that Liang Qichao focuses on the freedom of Buddhism, while Zhang Binglin focuses on the equality of Buddhism. In terms of the significance of equality, Zhang Binglin and Tan Sidong have the most similar interpretation of Buddhism, while Kang Yu-wei's understanding of Buddhism fraternity is unique among modern philosophers. To be clear, Kang Yu-wei did not deny that Buddhism talks about equality -- in this respect, Kang Yu-wei and Tan Ssu-t'ung are the same; What is different is that what Kang Yu-wei said most is the fraternity of Buddhism, which can also be called "great equality". This is just as he expressed in the book of great harmony: "in the world of great harmony, the new sunrise has the essence of meat and the great benefit of the same.... Then the whole world refrain from killing, but let there be great equality.... It begins with equality between men and women, and ends with equality between all, and ends with my love [4]". Thus it can be seen that Kang Yu-wei and Tan Ssu-t'ung's emphasis on Buddhism -- fraternity and equality not only responded to the practice of modern philosophers in saving the nation and enlightening their thoughts with Buddhism, but also increasingly diverging from the reality.

## References

- [1] The study of benevolence, complete works of Tan Ssu-t'ung, China Book Company, 1998, p. 289. p291. p293-294. p317. p333.
- [2] "Wan Mu Cao Tang: Spring and autumn fan-lu", the complete works of Kang Yu-wei (vol. 2), Ren Min university of China press, 2007, p167. p171. p173. p. 188. p206.
- [3] "Wan Mu Cao Tang: Confucius restructuring", the complete works of Kang Yu-wei (vol. 2), Ren Min university of China press, 2007, p. 152.
- [4] "Datong shu", Zhong Zhou Ancient Books press, 1998, p. 349. p361.
- [5] Kang nanhai's lecture on the history of ancient and modern learning", Kang Yu-wei's complete works (second volume), Ren Min university of China press, 2007, p. 110.
- [6] The biography of Mr. Kang of nanhai, complete works of Liang Ch'i-chao (volume 1), Beijing press, 1999, p. 488.
- [7] "Shang Ouyang zhonghu shi", Tan Ssu-t'ung complete works (addendum) China Book company 1998 edition, page 464.
- [8] The emperor's book, yan fu ji (volume 1), Zhong Hua Book company, 1986, pp. 73-74.
- [9] "Benevolence studies > preface", Tan Ssu-t'ung complete works (revised edition), Chinese Book company, 1998, p. 374.